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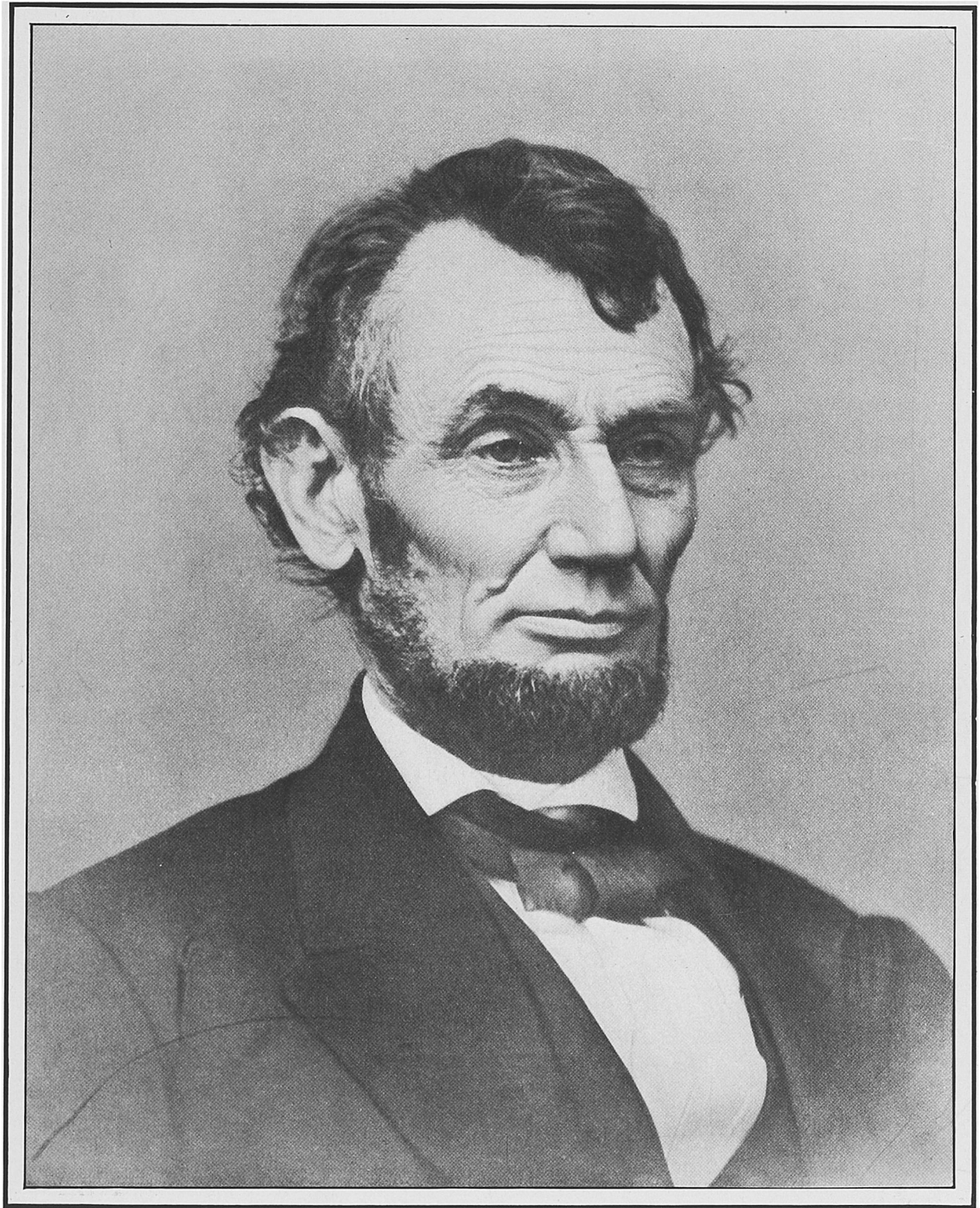
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ONE OF THE GRANDEST HEADS EVER MODELED BY THE CREATOR

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

From a photograph taken shortly before his death

A MISTAKE IN BRONZE

EARLY in December last notices were sent out informing the New York public that on the 12th there would be an exhibition of George Gray Barnard's statue of Lincoln in the grounds of the Theological Seminary on Broadway at 120th Street. Beside this, placards seven feet high were placed in some of the elevated and subway stations announcing the same event,—an unheard of publicity. It was at first our intention not to notice this statue, but so many have inquired: "What is your opinion of Barnard's Lincoln?" that at last we are forced either to approve or disapprove it, or be accused of moral cowardice.

The Literary Digest in its issue of February 10th, 1917, has an article on the statue in which it quotes the *Milwaukee Sentinel* as follows:

"The question arises, Is it realism at all? Is it a faithful presentment in bronze of the real Lincoln? That question is still fairly capable of settlement. There are entirely credible and competent witnesses now living who knew Lincoln in the flesh and remember perfectly well how he looked—no difficult thing, for 'Old Abe' was a striking figure that, once seen, was never forgotten.

"We have tried this test, by submitting to some who knew Lincoln in life the appalling photographic cut of the production, which is supposed to perpetuate for Cincinnatians the appearance of Lincoln. The consensus of usually indignant testimony is that it is fearfully and wonderfully unlike Lincoln as they knew him.

"The Sculptor seems to have evolved his conception of Lincoln out of his inner consciousness, tho' he states that he was greatly assisted by contemplating a man he met in Louisville, who was six feet four and one-half inches tall, who was born not far from Lincoln's birthplace, and who had been splitting rails all his life.

"The finished artistic result of these processes is one that, so far as our own inquiries go, is calculated to stir to wrath and resentment those who knew Mr. Lincoln in life and must be admitted to be competent witnesses as to his personal appearance.

"It is perfectly possible to combine good art with a respectable degree of verisimilitude in these productions. If we are going to have statues of Lincoln, a decent respect for the memory of 'Old Abe' seems to require that they resemble him, and are not freaks of fancy that with a few alterations might do duty as figures of Ichabod Crane, or Dominic Sampson, or St. Simeon Stylites on his penitential pillar."

It is an axiom that when a man sets up a public work of art in a public place, it becomes a candidate for public approval or condemnation. We are sorry we can not approve this statue of Lincoln by Mr. Barnard, and that we must agree with the verdict expressed above by the *Milwaukee Sentinel*. And it is safe to say that this verdict expresses the almost universal opinion of artists and laymen here who have seen the statue.

In an article in the *New York Sun* of December 18th, 1916, defending his work, Mr. Barnard said:

"An imaginary Lincoln is an insult to the American public, a thwarting of Democracy, no imitation tool of any artist's conception, but the tool God and Lincoln made—Lincoln's own self must be shown." The question now is: Has Mr. Barnard shown Lincoln's own self? We will let the public judge from the documents which we here furnish.

Because Lincoln was born in a log-cabin, split rails, built and pushed a flat-boat, was a Captain in the Black Hawk War and conformed to the indifference to dress which inevitably was forced upon the pioneers in every frontier region by the hardness of their life, he has been so often represented as a "slouch," as a "hobodemocrat" and as a despiser of elegant social forms, that it has found general credence among the unthinking—to the detriment of our country, because in

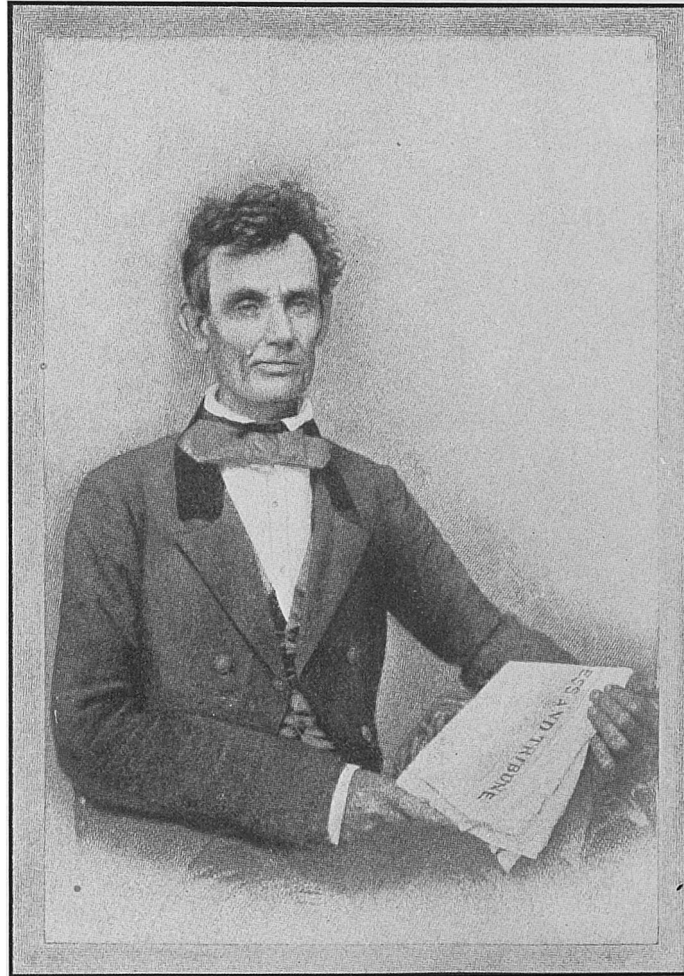


FIG. 1—PHOTOGRAPH OF LINCOLN

Taken on the spur of the moment to please a companion, during an after-dinner walk, showing him dressed in the height of fashion of the time, showing that he was not a slouch.

this the autocratic reactionary forces of Europe have found one of their strongest points in their endeavor to show to what vulgarity our "slouch democracy" will reduce elegant Europe—if they go any further in the direction of democracy. But this "slouchiness" of Lincoln is an absurd myth and a calumny, as we will prove.

We have many photographs to show that Lincoln always dressed in the best clothes his money could buy, whenever he could do so. He was even humanly vain, as every wise man is. We have the fullest record of this, for no president was ever more photographed, and he always had on his best clothes whenever he, deliberately, sat for his photo-

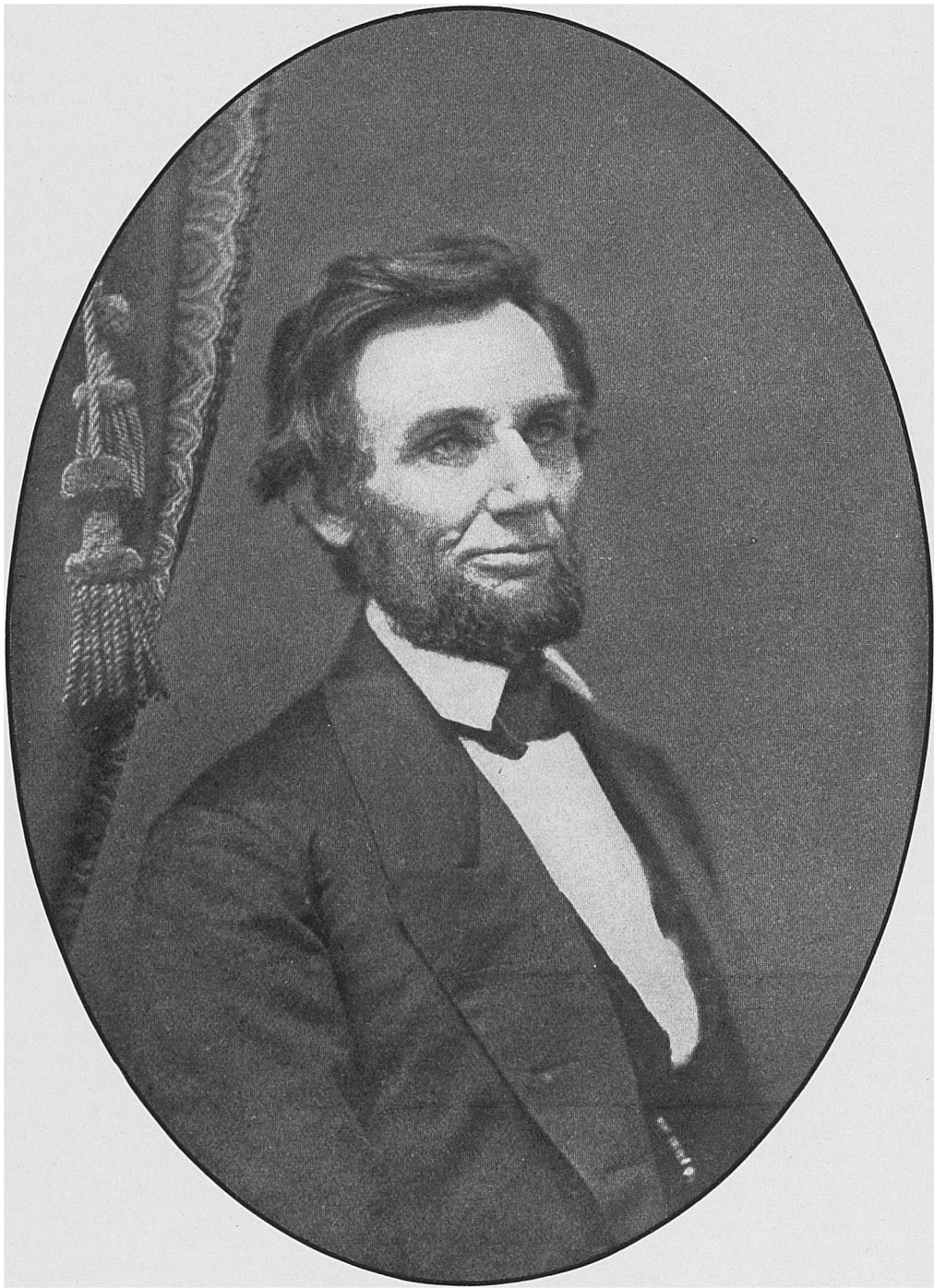


FIG. 2—PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN IN 1861

Also Showing that Lincoln was plain but not ugly; simple but not common and that he was careful in his dress whenever he appeared in public.

graph. This dressing up to the best of his ability for public occasions proves, as well as does his political philosophy, that Lincoln was fully aware of the absolute importance of elegant social forms—if this nation is to realize its highest destiny.

That he was sometimes careless in his dress is true, but only in off-moments, when he was sweating for the nation. But so were Grant, Sherman and Sheridan, not to speak of the imperial Napoleon and the aristocratic Washington—in war times. The Civil War was no time for playing the rôle of Beau Brummel. Bloody business was the topic of the hour. But in spite of the grimy work of the day, Lincoln was always reasonably well dressed, above all when he deliberately appeared in public.

This is proved by a photograph, Fig. 1, a miserable photo taken to please a companion who asked him, on the spur of the moment during a walk after dinner when before a cheap photographer's shop, to sit for a likeness to serve as a souvenir. He did not even take time to comb his hair and he wears a quizzical kind of a look, showing that he regarded it as more or less of a joke. This was in 1854 when he was forty-five and scarcely thinking of the presidency. But notice the silk vest and velvet collar on the broadcloth coat, and note the carefully tied necktie. This was the most fashionable thing in 1854, seven years before he became president.

Now see Fig. 3. Notice the same care in dress. This photo dates from 1860, taken the day after he made his Cooper Institute Speech in New York, one that has been called the "President-making photograph." Here he deliberately posed for his photo; and see with what care his hair was arranged, and how dignified, even handsome, he looks!

Then see Fig. 2, taken in 1861. Note the velvet vest, the fine broadcloth of the coat and the immaculate shirt front, collar and tie.

Finally see Fig. 4. Note his "elegant" boots. Many more photographs could be shown to prove that he was up to date in dress at all times—when circumstances allowed it.

Here then we have proved that it is a calumny silly beyond measure to represent Lincoln as indifferent to the proprieties and a despiser of good form and refinement in clothing.

Now notice the slouchiness of the dress on Mr. Barnard's statue. (Figs. 10, 11 and 12.) But note especially the deliberate pushing of the coat collar under the disarranged shirt collar, making the latter stick out like an owl's ear, and calling attention to an occasional disarrangement of his collar, which was almost inevitable considering the peculiar collar then in fashion. Was this deliberately so composed by Mr. Barnard in order to accentuate the reputation of Lincoln for slouchiness and devotion to a "shirt-sleeve" and "hobo" democracy? If so, it is a libel on Lincoln. At any rate, it attracts the eye so much that it sidetracks the attention away from the head, which is the one important thing in any portrait-statue. And this is a capital fault in any conception and composition of a portrait-statue of a president who, like Lincoln, had risen to be a majestic national hero.

Let Americans remember that Lincoln was an artist—one of the world's greatest. Witness his Gettysburg address, so beautiful, poetic and soul-emotioning that it has become the nation's political Sermon on the Mount, which will inspire our people for all time to move on towards higher levels of thought and feeling. And, since every truly great artist loves beauty, order and distinction of form, we can rest assured that Lincoln loved them also and that deep down he hated ugliness, disorder and vulgarity whether in word, deed or dress.

The question now is, should Lincoln be thus shown as a slouch? This is one of the most urgent and important questions for the American people to answer. For there lurks danger to our democracy in setting up a statue of Lincoln as a symbol of a slouch-democracy in a public square. We will let the public reflect over this question, and give its answer.

Another myth is the libel that Lincoln was an *ugly* man. In reality he had one of the grandest faces ever modelled by a benign providence.

Whether we take him as he appeared in 1860 (see Fig. 3, page 214) without a beard, or as he appeared before his assassination in 1865 (see page 210) he had a grand face. Let the reader study this face and read the story told there. Also study the life mask—Figs. 6 and 7.

That he was not an Adonis, that he did not have the matinee-idol face of his assassin, the actor Booth, is true. But he had a man's face. Therefore to say he was *ugly* is stupid beyond measure. He was a plain man—not ugly; simple, not common; rugged, not a "rough-neck."

The Literary Digest of February 10th, 1917, published a reproduction of a photo of Lincoln standing (see Fig. 8). This shows:

First. That his general proportions were as perfect as those of any man, even though he was six feet four inches tall. This is also borne out by the seated photos—Figs. 4 and 5.

Second. That he had considerable grace.

Third. That his shoulders were broad and square and not sloping.

Fourth. That he had a neck of normal length and thickness. All the best American sculptors have hitherto represented him thus (see Saint-Gaudens's standing statue, page 219, and Weinman's seated statue—Fig. 13). Sculptors Ball, Bissell, French and Niehaus also represent him thus.

Fifth. All the photographs and statues we show indicate that he had hands and feet which, if anything, were small for so large a man.

Now look at Barnard's Lincoln—Figs. 9, 10, 11 and 12, which show the statue from all sides. Note:

First. The false proportions throughout the statue.

Second. The narrow, sloping, consumptive shoulders.

Third. The absolute lack of grace.

Fourth. Now notice, in Fig. 9, the enormously long, scrawny neck giving the effect of the head of an anaconda struggling out of a hole in the ground. This is accentuated by the expression of sourness and a cadaverous accentuation of Lincoln's lack of

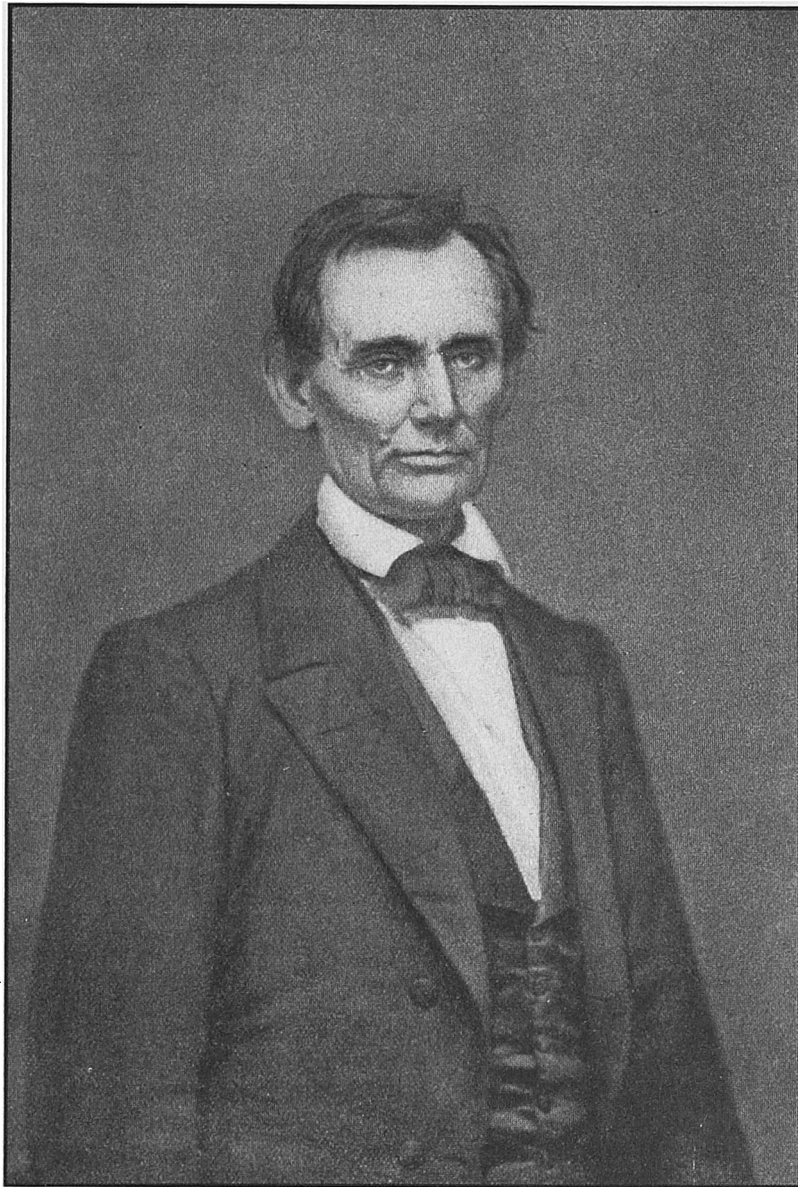


FIG. 3—"THE PRESIDENT-MAKING PHOTOGRAPH"

Made the morning after delivering his Cooper Institute speech in New York. This also shows that, if anything, Lincoln was a handsome man, at least far from being ugly.

flesh in the face. This is utterly untrue to the life masks, Figs. 6 and 7, which already accentuated his leanness, because all human flesh shrinks under pressure when cast in plaster. And that he was not so cadaverous is proven by the photographs 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Fifth. Note the enormous and utterly untrue hands on Mr. Barnard's statue, Fig. 10, etc. One would say that the statue was intended only to show posterity what abnormal hands Lincoln had when in reality his hands were in proportion to his frame. They draw the attention so insistently in this statue that the head becomes of secondary importance, a violation of the fundamental law of all sane sculpture. This is a sample of the "deformation of the form," of the social danger of which we spoke in our February number. Notice also in this photograph the needless accentuation of the "adam's-apple" on the neck, more prominent than the nose or chin, and also taking the attention away from the face—which should not be.

Now let us study carefully the feet of Lincoln in the portraits — Figs. 4 and 5. Notice that, if there is any disproportion at all, it is, we repeat, on the side of *smallness* of feet. Then notice how slender his foot is, how actually "genteel" [forgive the word] and encased in a well-fitting boot.

Then look at the deformed feet of the statue shown in Figs. 9, 10, 11 and 12. No human being, except one born a degenerate, ever had such feet. To put such feet on the statue of any president of this country, above all of President Lincoln is, to say the least, an æsthetic aberration. And there can be no excuse such as "the camera lied." It stood far enough away to give a correct report of the statue and its deformities. We know, for we saw the statue and pondered over it. Besides they have been copyrighted and released by Mr. Barnard. We will waive discussing the ugliness of every fold in the trousers which look more like two legless stove-pipes than human legs draped in cloth, and will pass on to the general conception of the statue (see Figs. 10, 11 and 12).

The figure stands there with hands pressing the stomach, with a lugubrious expression on the face with only half-opened eyes (see Fig. 10), a mournful mouth (see Figs. 9 and 11) giving the impression of a man saying: "Friend, for pity's sake, relieve me of my pain—I have the colic!"

The plaster mask of Lincoln's face (see Figs. 6 and 7) was made by the sculptor, Leonard Volk of Chicago, from life—not after death, which then usually distorts the face. Therefore, though it somewhat accentuated the leanness in the face of Lincoln, it is so nearly in accord with the photographs of Lincoln taken about the same time as to make it the truest record of his features that we have, and one of the most precious of national relics. When we now compare this mask with the face of Mr. Barnard's statue, we find that the face on the statue is not even a good physical likeness of Lincoln from the standpoint of presenting "Lincoln's own self" as Mr. Barnard asserts.

Moreover, and most important of all, the face on the statue represents Lincoln as if he had been a melancholy, distrust-inspiring weakling, which is utterly untrue. No man's face ever roused confidence more than the face of Lincoln. That is why he became President. Nor was he melancholy by nature. No national hero in history was so full of a sense of humor as Lincoln. He always saw the funny side of things, and most do have a funny

side. Besides, his physical courage and moral courage were so great that he was the most serene man in the country during the Civil War. With Washington and Napoleon, Grant and Joffre he also proved the truth of the golden remark of Emerson: "A serene face is success enough in life and the end of Nature attained."

It was the Olympian serenity of a fearless soul. It was this, which in the howling storm, when even his friends of the North, stricken with trepidation, "rocked the boat" and even assailed him, which enabled him to quell the storm. It is this serenity which invested him with that hypnotic power that conquered the confidence of the people and enabled him to guide the ship of state in his own way, and finally to lead the nation through doubt and fear to victory!

So we see that nothing about this statue is true—neither the face nor the neck, shoulders, hands, feet, drapery or character—neither body nor soul. Not being true, the *Milwaukee Sentinel* was right in saying: "The sculptor seems to have evolved his conception of Lincoln out of his inner consciousness."

In his Address on April 29th, in the shadow of Washington's tomb, M. Viviani of the French Commission said: "When we contemplate in the distant past the luminous presence of Washington, in nearer times the majestic figure of Abraham Lincoln, when we respectfully salute President Wilson, the worthy heir of these great memories, we at once measure the vast career of the American people." This shows to what extent the intellectual world has invested the figure of Lincoln with majesty. Does Mr. Barnard's statue express that majesty? It is the consensus of opinion of those who saw it here that it does not, and that it is a melancholy mistake in bronze.

Mr. Barnard's idea of representing Lincoln as the "Democrat" was from the start impossible—because it is an abstraction, one that can not be expressed in sculpture even as was Rodin's idea of expressing the entire "Comédie Humaine" of Balzac which his friend Henri Rochefort told him was foolish.

Mr. Barnard says that in his profound travail to show "Lincoln's own self" he wandered far and drifted to Kentucky and, near the birthplace of Lincoln, found an old rail-splitter of the height of Lincoln and used him as a model to make this statue. Well, every rail-splitter is not a Lincoln. There may be millions of rail-splitters, even of Lincoln's height, without having among them a man of such perfect proportions as were those of Lincoln.

Lincoln's fine soul shaped his fine figure, grand head, and even the elegant small feet, which the photographs show. No other, no common man—above all a life-long rail-splitter—could serve as a model of Lincoln without being idealized in harmony with the photographs, and then the statue would not be literally true, and being not true would not be the "Lincoln's own self" which Mr. Barnard says he sought to render.

It would have been far wiser if Mr. Barnard had done as the rest of American sculptors did—followed the photographs of Lincoln and not the gnarled, badly proportioned Kentucky rail-splitter. Had he done that he would not have fallen into the abyss of a "deformation of the form."

How history repeats itself! When Bandinelli's marble group of "Hercules and Cacus" was unveiled at Florence in 1534 there was a real riot. The figure had muscles so exaggerated that Michelangelo ridiculed it by saying: "The body of Hercules resembles a sack of pineapples." Many others condemned it

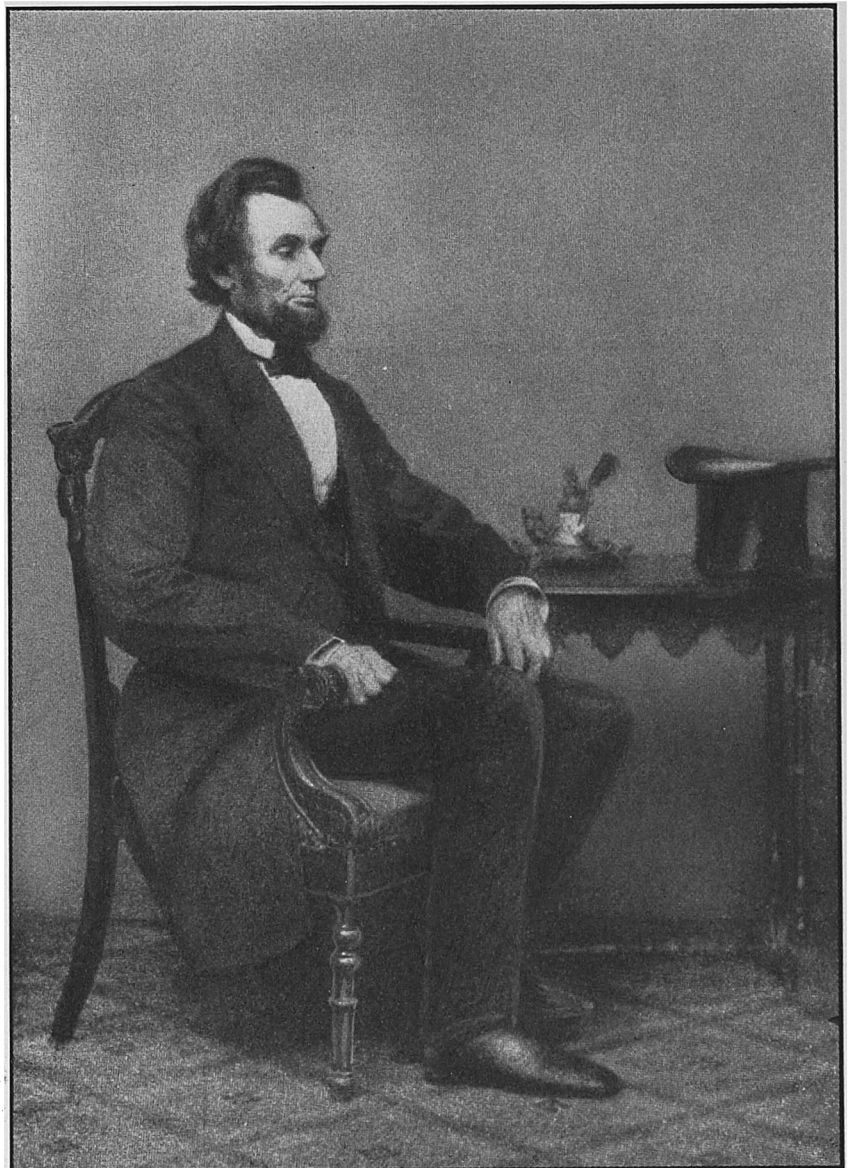


FIG. 4—PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN ABOUT 1865
Showing that Lincoln had really small hands and feet for a man of his size and that his feet were slender and elegant and not clumsy.

severely. So that several arrests had to be made by Alessandro de Medici, whose family paid for the group and who was the protector and patron of Bandinelli. According to all accounts the latter had the "swelled head"—an insufferable insolence. He was a poseur and held aloof from and was hated by all the artists of his time, and for sound reasons. This, in many respects absurd, group is still in place in front of the Uffizi Gallery as a curio of a Bandinelli trying to surpass not only a Michelangelo but the Greeks—in force of expression! But his reputation as a sculptor never survived this first example in history of a deliberate "deformation of the form."

When Rodin also resorted to a system of the deformation of the form in his statue of Balzac he had the common-sense to show it in the plaster in the Salon of Paris of 1898, where it was promptly howled down. Such a commotion was raised that the commission was taken away

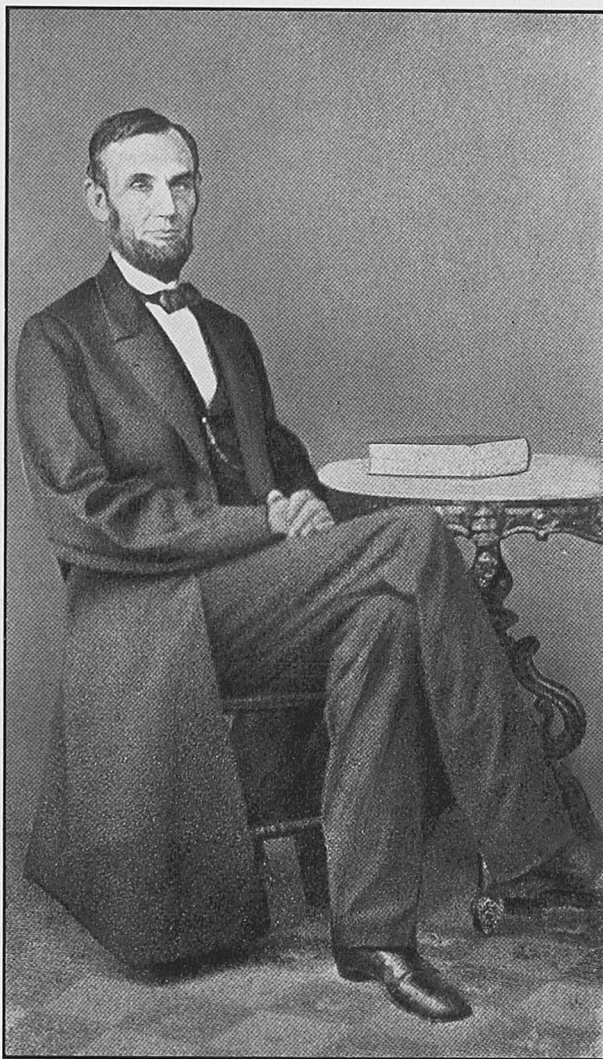


FIG. 5—ANOTHER PHOTOGRAPH

Showing that the proportions of Lincoln were elegant, also showing that his hands and feet were small for a man of his size.

from him, even though he also had gone through a long labor trying to engender a real "new thing" in a public statue. He had lost his way in a jungle of esoteric, cryptic reasoning about beauty, "deformation of the form," etc. And his reputation also began to decline from the day he exhibited that statue and failed to confess—by smashing it—that it was an aberration.

We believe the best friends of Mr. Barnard are those who give him warning that a like fate awaits him, unless he confesses that he went off at a tangent under the pressure of a desire to be more original than any other American sculptor ever sought to be, and in his eagerness overshot the mark and made a grave mistake. He will show wisdom as well as business sense by taking his statue down and making a new one.

We have said before:
A public monument is a public avenue for the expression by the public of public thought and feel-

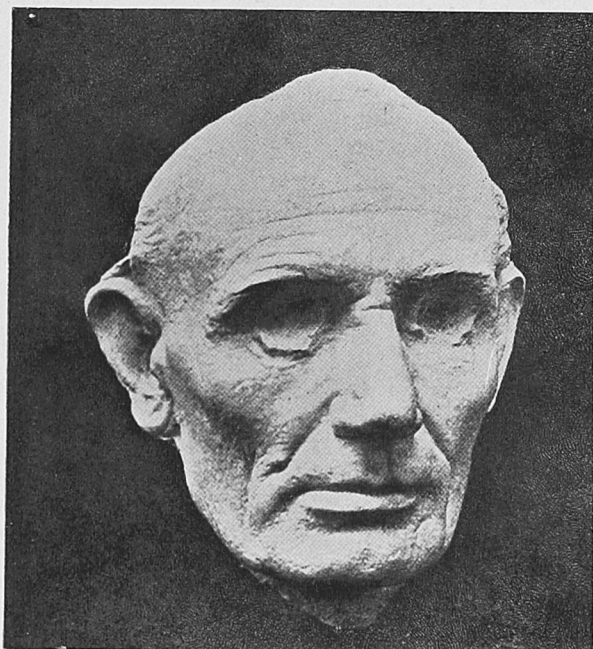


FIG. 6—PLASTER MASK

Taken not after death but from life, which, although accentuating the leanness of Lincoln's face, yet shows that he had a grand face, full of serenity.

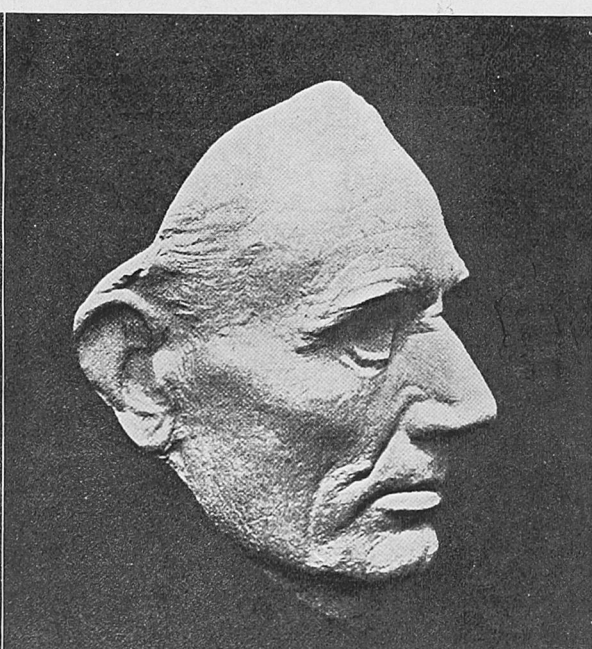


FIG. 7—PROFILE OF LIFE MASK

ing. There should be nothing private about it. A sculptor should serve his country as the President serves it—express the national thought and feeling and only in forms that please, not him, but the public. If he is chosen for that purpose because of any skill he manifested in his private work, before he is honored with the exalted commission to act as the poetic spokesman of the nation, he should subordinate his private whims and caprices as to novelty of style and form to the natural and inevitable demand of the public for *enduring* truth of form, and a spirit at once true and lofty.

In other words, he should not *deform the form* for the sake of an egotistical parade of an absurd pretence to originality. If he wishes at all hazards to prove that he is "an original genius," let him do it in his private work, not in a public monument. If he accepts the commission to make a monument for the public, let him show his originality in his *composition*, but not in giving us deformed feet and hands and heads. Let him remember that what the public needs is not esoteric rhodomontades in bronze, ugly as sin, but common-sense beauty. This can be done and yet express the character of any national hero, and also at the same time the sculptor's own artistic "temperament," as a number of our sculptors has done. Thus he will furnish the public with a mirror in which it can contemplate itself with pride and satisfaction.

We have to-day some truly great sculptors in America—but they do not run after the extravagances of a Rodin or a Bandinelli. We know one sculptor who made a statue for the Library of Congress. He made four different models, put them in a row in his studio and then invited about twenty-five painters, sculptors, architects and

laymen to his studio to vote for the best one. Almost unanimously these chose the one he himself had chosen. The result was a statue pleasing to the government and the public.

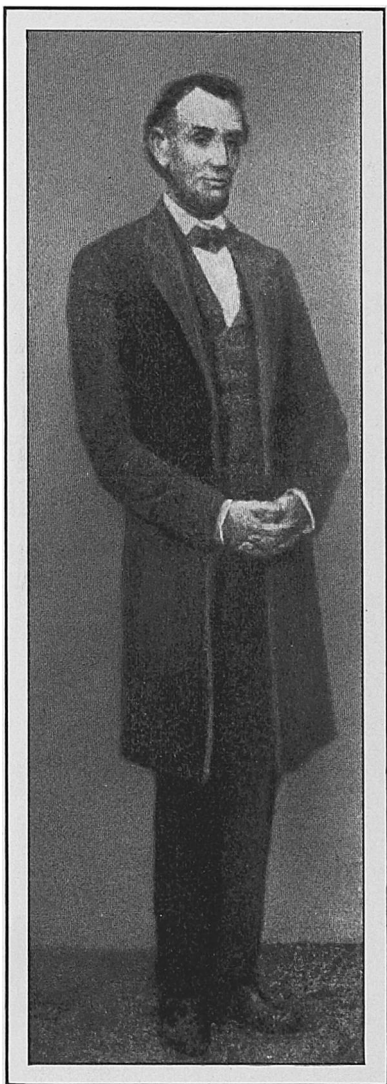
Saint-Gaudens, a truly great sculptor, had the courage to destroy one finished model for his "Shaw" monument for Boston and make another twice the size, and worked on this problem for twelve years, sparing neither time, energy nor money. He did not have a "swelled head" like Bandinelli, but with trembling respect for public opinion, called in his artist friends for helpful criticisms before casting his model in bronze, and then acted upon them.

Thus he finally gave the American people a masterpiece that will endure across the ages, and for which they will more and more take him to their hearts.

The same is true of his statue of Lincoln (see page 219). Before casting his clay model in plaster Saint-Gaudens called in his friends and fellow artists, even his rivals, and asked them for suggestions and criticisms and acted on many of them. The result was a masterly statue of Lincoln.

We know that a large number of sculptors and mural decorators, in this age of "individualism" are l'outrance, will not like our contention that, after all, they are mere tools which the public must use for the expression of public thought and feeling, and that they insist upon the right of treating a public monument as "a private snap" and in any way that suits them best. But they must learn to distinguish

between their own private work and public work. No artist should allow himself to be constrained in his private work. That is the avenue for the expression of his own self. He can hold it sacret if he wishes. And he must not wince when the public rejects even his private works. But when it comes to a public monument in which the public looks



Courtesy of the Literary Digest

FIG. 8.—FROM A PHOTOGRAPH OF LINCOLN

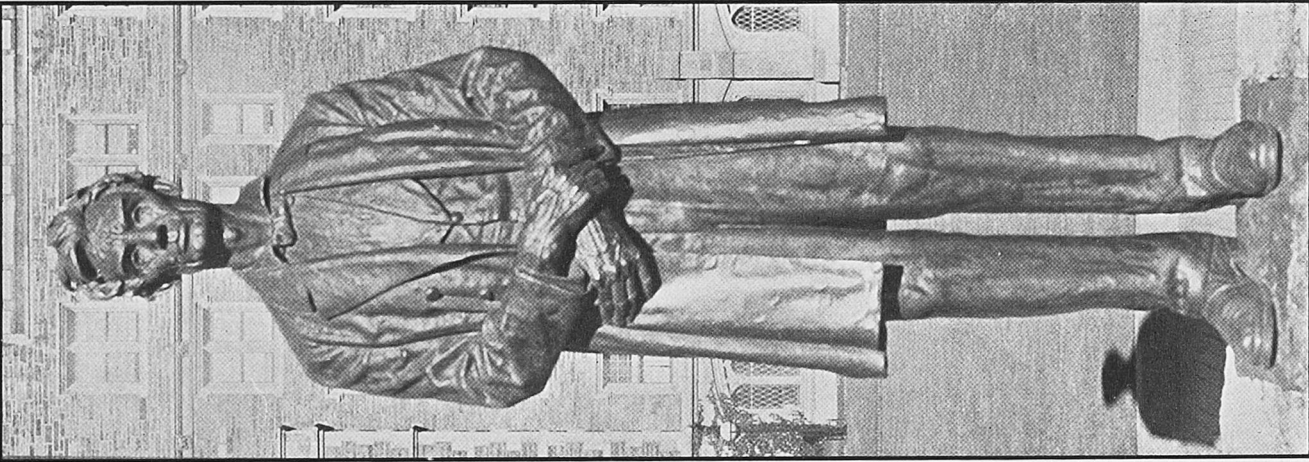
Showing the squareness of his shoulders, also the elegance of his proportions and that he had a certain amount of grace, also showing that his hands and feet were not large for his size.



Copyright by G. G. Barnard

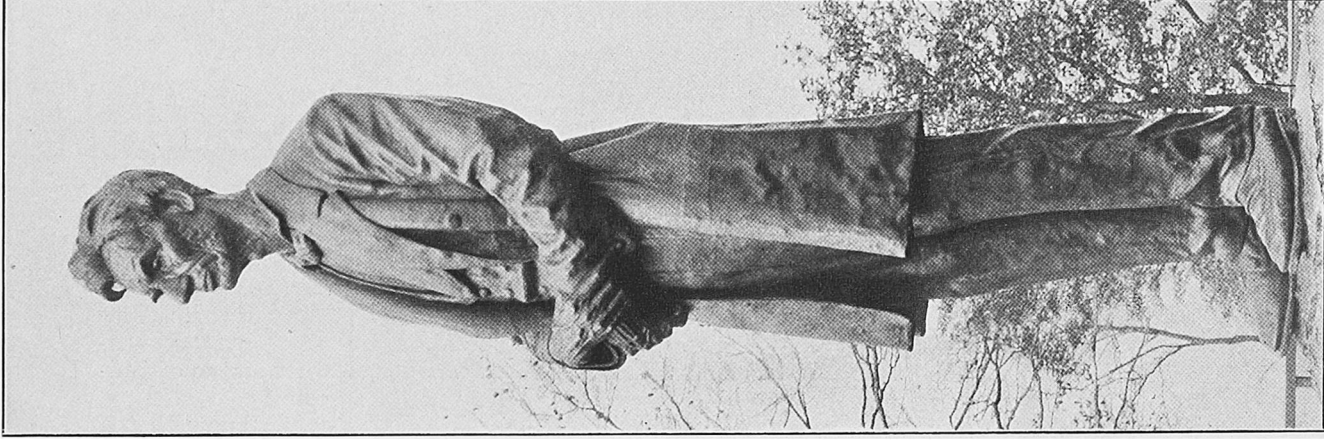
FIG. 9—THREE-QUARTER VIEW OF MR. BARNARD'S STATUE

Showing stooped shoulders, very long neck, enormous hands, gigantic feet and a lugubrious face, untrue to Lincoln.



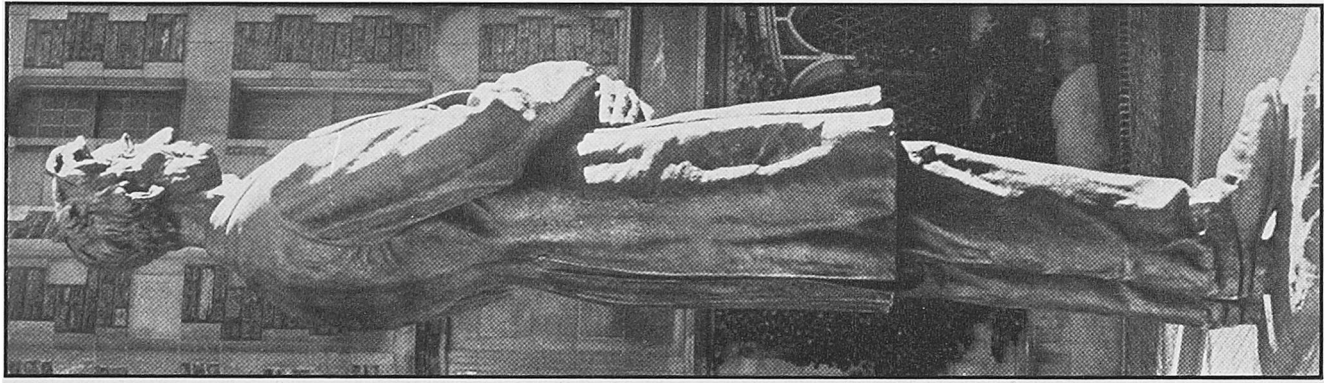
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FIG. 10.—FRONT VIEW OF BARNARD'S STATUE. Accentuating the size of his hands, etc.; also showing a deliberately introduced element of slouchiness by putting the collar of the coat under a point of the shirt collar and other suggestions of slouchiness untrue to Lincoln.



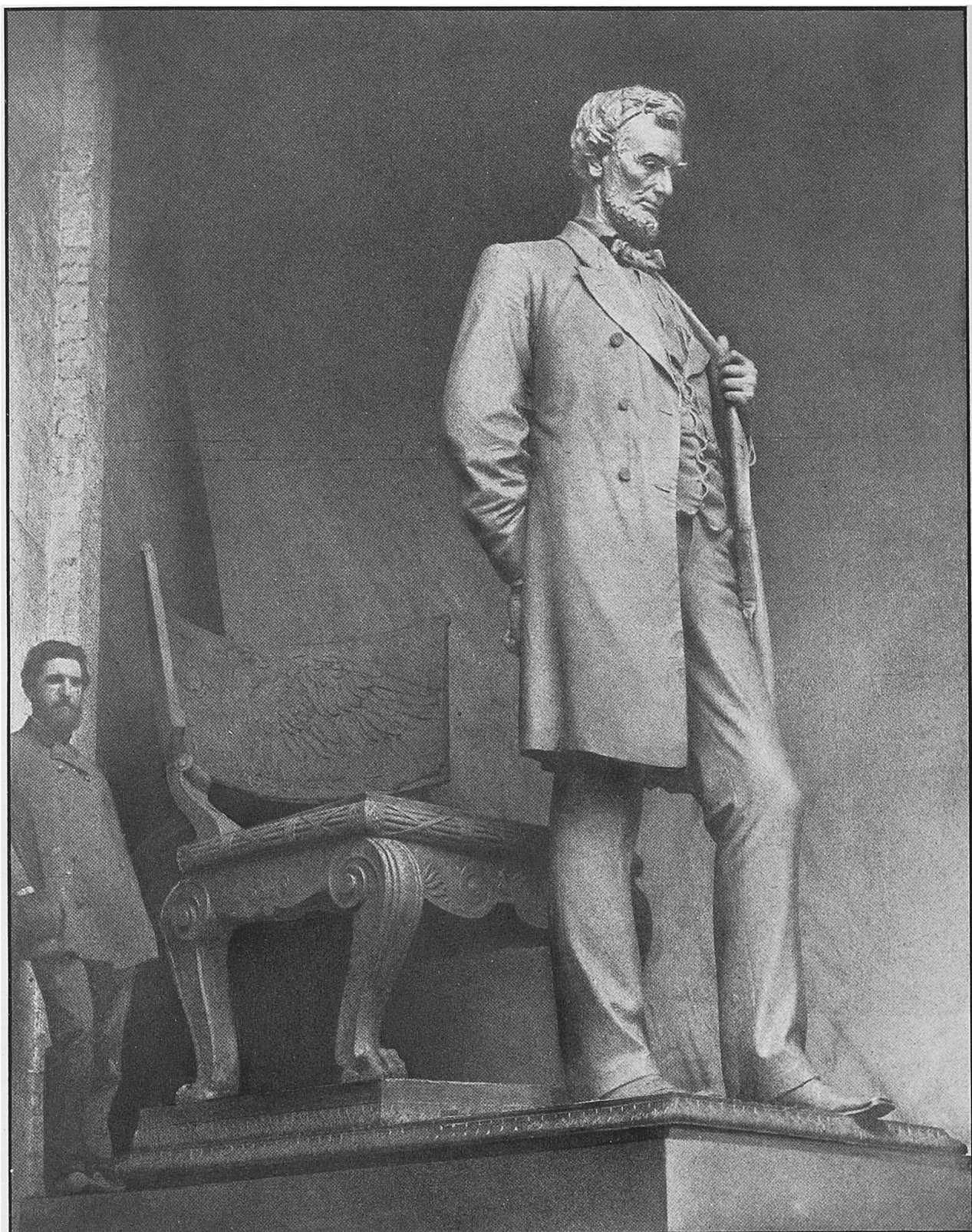
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FIG. 11.—ANOTHER VIEW OF THE STATUE Showing Lincoln pressing his hands over his stomach as if he had the colic.



Copyright, G. G. Barnard

FIG. 12.—ANOTHER VIEW OF THE STATUE Showing the clumsy and lumpy feet, utterly untrue to Lincoln.



STATUE OF LINCOLN BY SAINT-GAUDENS

Showing his squareness of shoulders, also correctness of proportions and a reasonable observance of elegance in dress.

The most true, because the most majestic, statue so far made of Lincoln.

From an unpublished photograph from the clay model, showing the sculptor on the left of the picture.

(See page 213)

forward to seeing its thought and feeling expressed in the loftiest forms possible, his first duty is to study the shortest way of permanently stirring the finest emotions of the public if he wishes his work to endure and to win a place in the hearts of his fellowmen, instead of having his work condemned and remaining an eye-sore in bronze on a public square.

We trust that the facts at least which we have laid before our readers will help to destroy once for all the two libels on Lincoln: i. e., that he was an ugly man and that he was a slouch; our main purpose being to aid other public forces in their effort to take him out of the class of hobo-democrats,—into which he has been pushed by the demagogic mob-ocrats,—who imagine that slouch-democracy is the salvation of the world, and the last expression of what democracy should mean.

Lincoln loathed these political parasites beyond measure.

One has only to study the fine style, the beautiful artistry in Lincoln's speeches, public papers and even in his letters to see that he had the fine soul of a great artist. And all great artists, by instinct, love order, elegance and beauty in all its forms.

Therefore, we want to help to place Lincoln where he would have wished to be placed—in that class of male democrats who know, as Elihu Root has finely said, that: "Democracy means organized self-control," under which, when it is finally achieved, a virile beauty in all things will become the main object of society, in this life, and all ugliness will be banned.

It is profoundly important that the American people should fight every tendency to debase or discredit democracy, be it by word or deed or any kind of art. Therefore, any poem or painting or statue which, in an effort to symbolize democracy, decks out the symbol in slouchiness and makes it stand, whether consciously or unconsciously, for hobo-ism rather than for elegance of social form—to which every real democrat does aspire—should be frowned upon by every section of the American press which aims to lead the people to a higher conception of society than has as yet obtained in this land of ours. Because the powerful as well as the creative minds of the country aspire to something more than "radicalism in rags"; and, if they are forced by the

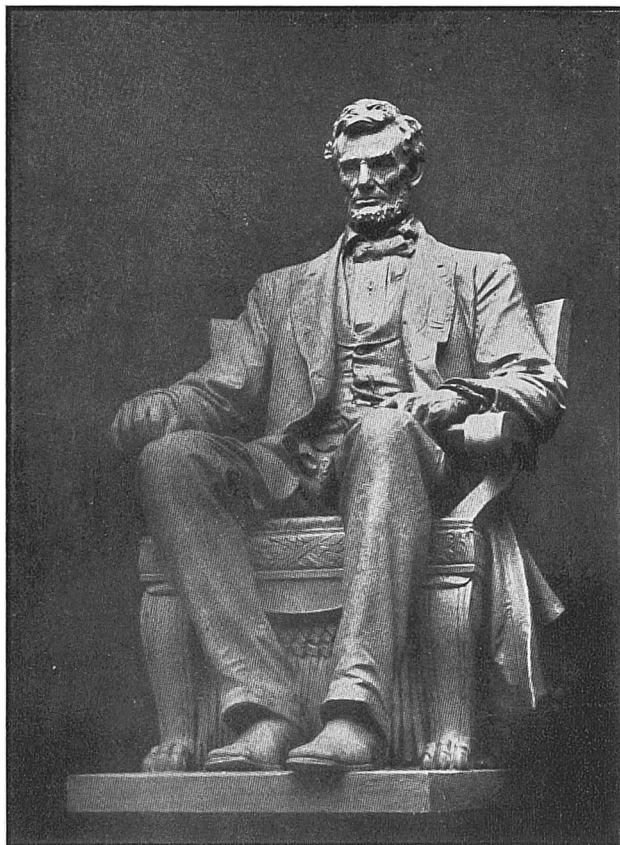


FIG. 13—FROM THE STATUE OF LINCOLN BY WEINMAN
Also showing that Lincoln had square shoulders, etc.

hobo-minded to choose between a democracy smacking of the ugliness of the barnyard and an autocracy offering something more ideal and beautiful they will slowly, but most certainly, drift towards the latter. This is because the cosmic urge throughout nature is towards the beautiful, and throughout all the oscillations of time, men have always come back to that supreme pursuit of nature—the creation of the beautiful. That is the main reason why Mr. Barnard's statue is a mistake in bronze.

Lincoln, more than any man in history has proven the truth of the maxim: "No man is a hero to his valet." We will be content if we have helped to prove that, as a man and as a national hero, he was not hobo-esque but—majestic.

